

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

SC Suspends Look Out Circular Against Man Facing Prosecution In CBI, ED Cases

NEW DELHI, APR 28: The Supreme Court on Tuesday suspended a look out circular issued by the CBI against a man who is facing prosecution in separate cases lodged by the probe agency and the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

The apex court also issued a notice to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) seeking its response within six weeks on a plea filed by petitioner Nimesh Navinchandra Shah, who has challenged the look out circular (LOC) issued against him by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Shah's counsel told a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta that the LOC was issued by the CBI in 2022 but he was not intimidated about it for around three years.

The bench went through the LOC dated November 9, 2022 which was placed before it by the CBI.

"We are of the view that the look out circular dated November 9, 2022 shall remain suspended," the top court said.



The bench said the MHA was required to be arrayed as a respondent in the matter in order to decide the issue raised in the petition. It impleaded the MHA as a party respondent and issued notice to it.

The apex court had earlier sought responses from the CBI, the Centre and the Maharashtra government on Shah's plea challenging a

February this year order of the Bombay High Court.

The high court had dismissed his plea seeking the quashing of the LOC issued against him by the CBI.

The high court had noted that in the CBI's case, Shah and others were accused of causing wrongful loss of Rs 464.41 crore to a consortium of banks. During the hearing on Tuesday, Shah's counsel

told the bench that the LOC was issued against the petitioner in 2022 but till May 2025, he was not intimidated about it. The CBI's counsel referred to an office memorandum concerning the issuance of the LOC.

"You have to implead the Ministry of Home Affairs," the bench told the petitioner's counsel.

On April 21, the petitioner's counsel had told the apex court that the LOC was never served upon him.

The bench had then granted a week to the CBI to file an additional affidavit, in particular, a copy of the LOC.

In its order, the high court had noted that the court cannot be oblivious of the registration of a case against Shah by the CBI and the filing of a prosecution complaint by the ED.

"The offence of siphoning of public money must be viewed very seriously by the court because such offences seriously challenge the financial stability of the country," the high court had said while dismissing his plea. (Agencies)

Dreams reflect interplay between personal traits, external events: Study

NEW DELHI, APR 28: The contents of a dream may not be random or chaotic, but could instead reflect a complex interplay between personal traits, such as one's tendency to mind-wander, interest in dreams, and sleep quality, and external events, including large-scale societal experiences like the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a new study.

Researchers at Italy's IMT School for Advanced Studies Lucca analysed over 3,700 reports of dream and waking experiences collected from 287 participants aged 18 to 70.

Over two weeks, the participants recorded daily experiences, while the researchers gathered information about sleep patterns, cognitive abilities, personality traits, and psychological characteristics.

The researchers analysed the words the participants used to describe both their daily lives and their dreams.

Rather than simply replaying waking experiences, dreams appear to reinterpret them, they said.

Elements from daily routines, such as work environments, healthcare settings, or education, do not reap-



pear as they are — they are instead reorganised into vivid, immersive scenarios, often blending different contexts and shifting perspectives into unfamiliar landscapes, the team said.

The results suggest that dreams do not just reflect reality, but actively reshape it, integrating fragments of past experiences with imagined or anticipated ones to create novel, sometimes surreal, scenarios, they added.

"Relative to waking reports, dreams shifted from self-referential, thought-centred narratives to perceptual experiences dominated by visuo-spatial details, multiple characters, and bizarre events," the authors wrote in the study published in the journal *Communications Psychology*.

"Stable traits, including attitude toward dreaming, mind-wandering propensity, and subjective sleep quality, selectively influenced dream content," they said. Lead author Valentina Elce, a researcher at the IMT School for Advanced Studies Lucca, said, "Our findings show that dreams are not just a reflection of past experiences, but a dynamic process shaped by who we are and what we live through." "By combining large-scale data with computational methods, we were able to uncover patterns in dream content that were previously difficult to detect," Elce said.

The transformations in dreams were also found to vary across individuals — for example, individuals more prone to mind-wandering

tended to report more fragmented and rapidly changing dream scenarios.

However, those with a strong belief in the value, meaning, and significance of dreaming in general, and with regard to their own dreams in particular, experienced perceptually richer and more immersive dream content, the researchers said.

A second independent dataset collected during the first 2020 COVID-19 lockdown and involving 80 participants allowed the researchers to examine the impact of a major external stressor on dreams.

During lockdown, dreams showed an increased reference to limitations and heightened emotional intensity, reflecting the broader social context, the team found.

The effects were seen to gradually diminish over time, suggesting that dream content evolves in parallel with psychological adaptation to major life events, they said.

The findings show that stable individual traits and incidental experiences jointly shape dream semantics, the researchers said. (Agencies)

Amit Shah Lauds NCB For Securing Drug Trafficker Salim Dola's Return From Turkiye

NEW DELHI, APR 28: In a major breakthrough, the Narcotics Control Bureau on Tuesday secured the return of notorious drug trafficker Mohammad Salim Dola from Turkiye, Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced here.

Dola (59) was arrested in Turkiye on the basis of an Interpol Red Notice issued on India's request in March 2024. He was wanted in multiple narcotics trafficking cases in India and had been absconding from the law enforcement agencies.

Calling it zero tolerance against the Narco syndicate, the Union home minister said on X, "Under Modi government's mission to ruthlessly smash drug cartels, our anti-narcotics agencies have extended their claws across borders through a robust network of global agencies."

"Now, no matter where they hide, no place is safe for drug kingpins," Shah said.

In a statement, the Ministry of Home Affairs said that Dola was brought from Turkiye, under "Operation Global-Hunt".

He was taken into custody on his arrival at IGI Airport, New Delhi, early this morning by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), it said.

"The successful return of Salim Dola, under the lead-



ership of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and guidance of Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah, reflects the firm resolve of the Government to bring all narcotics fugitives and members of organised crime syndicates to justice, by pursuing them relentlessly across the globe," the ministry said.

The Interpol Red Notice database states that Dola, born on December 31, 1966, speaks Hindi and Marathi and faces multiple charges under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act.

A Red Notice is Interpol's request to law enforcement

agencies worldwide to locate and provisionally arrest a person pending extradition, surrender, or similar legal action.

Over the years, Dola, a close aide of international terrorist Dawood Ibrahim, had allegedly established a major transnational drug trafficking syndicate spanning a number of countries in the Middle East, Africa and Europe.

His two-decade-long criminal antecedents include direct involvement in cases involving multiple high-value seizures of heroin, charas, mephedrone, mandrax and methamphetamine in Maha-

rashtra and Gujarat, the ministry said.

Dola's role consistently emerged as that of a bulk supplier to downstream distribution networks in India, and it was also sought by ATS Gujarat and the Mumbai police.

Earlier, his son Tahil Salim Dola and other associates were arrested by Mumbai police after deportation/extradition from the UAE in 2025, the ministry said.

This effort exemplifies close cooperation and coordinated action between the authorities in Turkiye, Interpol and Indian agencies, it said. (AGENCIES)

WhatsApp Banned 9,400 Accounts Involved In Digital Arrest Scams Since January This Year: Centre To SC

NEW DELHI, APR 28: A multi-pronged action involving telecom regulators, service providers, the RBI, tech giants and the CBI has been taken to tackle the rising menace of digital arrest scams, besides WhatsApp banning 9,400 accounts involved in such offences, the Centre has told the Supreme Court.

The action was detailed by the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C) of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) which has filed a comprehensive status report in pursuance of the Supreme Court's directions of February 9 to curb rising cases of digital arrests in the country, according to sources.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant, which had taken suo motu cognisance of online frauds, including digital arrests, had issued a slew of directions including asking the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), and others to jointly hold a meeting to come up with a framework for providing compensation in digital arrest cases.

The fresh status report, filed through Attorney General R Venkataramani, de-



tailed the enforcement actions taken by tech giant WhatsApp in the last 12 weeks since January this year.

"In direct response to concerns raised by I4C, MEITY (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology) and DoT, WhatsApp in January 2026 launched a structured, multi-week dedicated investigation specifically focused on digital arrest scams targeting Indian users. This investigation followed a rigorous methodology: identify seed signals map networks enforce against the entire network build scaled automated defences," it said, adding 9,400 accounts have been banned due to alleged involvement in digital arrests.

To further protect users, WhatsApp is deploying several "enforcement innova-

tions", including logo detection where systems to identify and remove accounts using official police or government insignia in display pictures, the status report said.

WhatsApp is contemplating introducing a new feature to warn users when they receive a call from a "newly created" or "non-tenured" account, a common trait of scam profiles, the status report said, adding that process to automatically hide profile pictures of suspicious unknown callers to prevent scammers from using visual cues of authority will also be introduced.

The DoT and the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) have committed to a strict new timeline for neutralising fraudulent SIM cards, including the fact that the committee is working toward a

mechanism to block suspicious SIM cards within 2 to 3 hours of identification, it said.

The report said the CBI has set a Rs 10 crore loss threshold for taking over digital arrest investigations.

Currently, the CBI has re-registered three major cases, including two cases from Gujarat involving massive financial frauds and a high-profile Delhi case where a single victim was defrauded of Rs 22.92 crore, it said.

The report said a high-level Inter-Departmental Committee chaired by senior officials held its third meeting on March 12, bringing together stakeholders, including telecom operators, financial regulators, and digital platforms. One of the key central proposals is the roll-out of a Biometric Identity Verification System (BIVS) to enable real-time, cross-network monitoring of SIM card issuance, it said.

The DoT has been tasked with implementing this system by December 2026, it added. The report said WhatsApp has committed to several safeguards, including implementation of SIM-binding mechanisms within four to six

Shah says Central forces will stay in Bengal for 60 more days after polls; asks people to vote without fear of 'Didi's goons'

KOLKATA, Apr 27: Central forces will remain in West Bengal for 60 more days after the assembly polls, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Monday and asked voters to cast their votes without fear of "Didi's goons" in the final phase, a remark signalling the Centre's commitment to prevent possible post-poll violence.

Shah made the remarks while addressing a gathering on the last day of the election campaign after leading a massive roadshow in Behala, where voting will take place on Wednesday during the second and final phase of the West Bengal assembly polls.

Voting was held in 152 constituencies on April 23 during the first phase of elections for the 294-member assembly. A record 93 per cent voter turnout was registered in the first phase. Votes will be counted on May 4.

"Brothers and sisters, go and vote on the 29th, do not worry about Didi's (Mamata Banerjee's) goons. The Election Commission has deployed CAPF at every nook and corner, and I am telling you that even though the BJP will come to power after the elections, central forces will remain here for 60 more

days," he said.

The road show, organised in support of BJP candidates for Behala Purba and Behala Paschim, turned the south Kolkata neighbourhood into a sea of saffron on the final day of campaigning.

Standing atop an open-hood vehicle, Shah waved at supporters and showered flower petals on crowds lining both sides of the road.

Asserting that there was a strong wave in favour of the BJP, Shah said that once voted to power, the party would take strict action against infiltrators and those involved in political violence.

"I want to warn Didi's goons in Chandernagar — do not step out to intimidate voters on April 29. After May 4, the BJP will punish the culprits and hang them upside down," he asserted.

Earlier this month, Election Commission officials said that as many as 500 CAPF companies will remain deployed across West Bengal for post-poll law and order duties even after the declaration of results. They will stay "till further orders of the EC," they said.

Each CAPF company comprises around 100 personnel. A record 2,450

central paramilitary companies, comprising nearly 2.5 lakh personnel, have been deployed across the state for the assembly polls. Of these, 2,321 CAPF companies have been deployed for the second phase of polling.

Amit Shah's statement that CAPFs would remain in West Bengal for "60 more days" even after polling is widely viewed through the prism of the 2021 post-poll violence in the state. After the results of the 2021 Assembly elections were declared on May 2, widespread violence was reported across several districts, with allegations of murders, arson, looting, assaults, sexual violence and forced displacement of opposition workers, particularly involving clashes between BJP and TMC supporters.

Political observers say Shah's remark serves multiple strategic purposes. First, it is aimed at reassuring anti-TMC voters—particularly BJP supporters in politically sensitive and violence-prone constituencies—that they can vote without fear of post-poll reprisals. In Bengal politics, allegations of post-election violence and intimidation remain a major psychological factor, and the BJP is seeking to neutralise that fear. Second, it

helps reinforce the BJP's long-standing political narrative that the TMC regime survives through coercion, intimidation and electoral violence, while the saffron party positions itself as the guarantor of democratic rights and free voting.

Third, it seeks to influence undecided voters and fence-sitters, especially in rural and semi-urban Bengal, where administrative pressure and local muscle power often shape voting behaviour. The underlying message is that the Centre will ensure protection, making it "safe" for voters to back the opposition.

During the roadshow, thousands of BJP workers and supporters, carrying party flags and orange-green balloons, thronged the route, raising slogans of "Jai Shri Ram" and "Bharat Mata ki Jai".

Later in the day, Shah took part in another road show at Chandannagar in Hooghly district, which also drew huge crowds and enthusiastic participation from party supporters.

Shah, who addressed more than 50 rallies and roadshows across West Bengal during the two-phase assembly elections, remained stationed in Kolkata since the night of April 20. He closely

monitored the party's electoral strategy and organisational mobilisation on the ground, underscoring the BJP's high-stakes campaign push in the state.

He also reiterated his allegations against Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, saying she was opposing the removal of infiltrators from electoral rolls, and that the ruling Trinamool Congress was protecting illegal immigrants for vote-bank politics.

"Didi feels pain when we say infiltrators must be removed. She is opposing SIR. Right now, names have been removed from electoral rolls, and after May 4, all infiltrators will be identified and removed from Bengal," he said.

After concluding the road show, Shah said the BJP was poised to form the next government in the state, and reiterated the party's commitment to implementing the Uniform Civil Code (UCC).

"A BJP government is going to be formed. We will implement the UCC," the home minister said, adding that after May 4, no one will be allowed to practice polygamy.

"So far, there has been no major incident of violence. Not a single death has taken place. The elections are being con-

ducted peacefully," he said.

In one of his sharpest attacks against the TMC during the ongoing campaign, Shah invoked the Ram temple-Babri Masjid dispute and referred to suspended TMC MLA and AJUP founder Humayun Kabir.

He alleged that Banerjee, through Humayun Kabir, wanted to build a "Babri Masjid" in Bengal.

"Mamata Didi wants her associate Humayun Kabir to build a Babri Masjid in Bengal. Didi, listen carefully, Bengal is in India. We will never allow a Babri Masjid to be built in Bengal," Shah said.

He also alleged large-scale corruption in social welfare schemes under the TMC government, and asserted that those responsible would not be spared if the BJP came to power.

Shah said bringing the BJP to power in West Bengal was essential to transform the state into a "Sonar Bangla" and restore law and order, development and good governance.

Shah also visited Gangasagar, located at the sacred confluence of the Hooghly River and the Bay of Bengal, and offered prayers for the bravehearts of the Indian Army.